

Benton Conservation District

State Legislative District #8, 16
Congressional District #4

Other Accomplishments



Salmon in the Classroom

About 2,000 students released salmon they raised into the Yakima River. Fifty partner entities participated in "Salmon in the Classroom," with contributions valued at over \$110,000.



Irrigation Conversions

BCD assisted producers in conversion to more efficient irrigation systems by providing \$57,588 in cost-share for 94 acres.

2008 Feature Accomplishment

No Future for Insect Pests as Benton CD Helps Producers into Year 2012

Resource Challenge

By 2012, all orchard producers must switch their operations to non-organophosphate pesticides to comply with Environmental Protection Agency standards. This change will have lasting positive effects on the waterways of Washington, but will also increase operating costs for orchardists.



Insect trap in a Rainier cherry tree.

Project Summary and Results

Benton Conservation District (BCD) cost-shared with 14 producers to pay the difference between the cost of conventional organophosphates and the non-organophosphate called Spinosad. The program also cost-shared the purchase of special sprayers needed for the thicker non-organophosphate sprays such as GF-120. Producers were given insect traps to place in their cherry orchards. Traps allowed orchardists to identify which insect pests entered their orchards at specific times during the growing season, key information for implementation of Integrated Pest Management practices. The contents of the traps could also prove to producers the new non-organophosphates were effective in controlling pests.

The program resulted in 348.5 acres enrolled for the one-year program. Most of the acreage was owned by producers that had not extensively used Spinosad products in the past. Most of the program area was within one mile of a river or stream, which contributes to reducing organophosphates in the Lower Yakima River watershed. With BCD assistance, participating producers are now "ahead of their time," controlling pests with new, safer chemicals well before the 2012 deadline.

Key Project Partners

Environmental Protection Agency, WA State Department of Ecology, WA State Conservation Commission, WA State University Extension.

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More Work To Do

Management of water resources is essential in this arid and growing region. The lower Yakima River offers potential for critical salmon habitat restoration. WA State Department of Ecology is expected to release TMDL recommendations for the Yakima River. As suburban-wildland interface expands, residents will need additional Firewise support. A growing number of nearby districts rely upon BCD for "Salmon in the Classroom" program services.